

FOX crews bring versatility to DIVARTY Combat Team

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Bell, 372nd MPAD

CAMP STEEL FALCON, Iraq – American dictionaries defines versatility as, “the ability to do many things.” The 69th Chemical Company’s Reconnaissance (RECON) Platoon exemplifies the word and more.

Besides the unit’s doctrinal mission to seek out and detect nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) threats against coalition forces and Iraqi residents in and around Baghdad, the 13 Soldiers assigned to operate the Army’s M 93A1 NBC Reconnaissance System, commonly known as the Fox, have been busy supporting the 1st Armored Division Artillery Combat Team (DCT) in ways that are not always expected.

From operating temporary checkpoints, traveling on recon patrols or providing convoy security, the Fox teams have been operating 24 hours a day supporting missions in DIVARTY’s southern Baghdad sector.

“Flexibility means being able to adapt and change at moment’s notice,” said Sgt. Tanya Jackson, a squad leader assigned to operate the large six-wheel light-armored vehicle. “The recon platoon and its Foxes have been more than flexible through out this deployment. We have done everything from zone patrols to route improvised explosive device (IED) clearance.”

Weighing more than 19 tons, the German-made vehicle demands attention on the crowded highways and in Baghdad’s densely populated neighborhoods.

The Fox is a prime platform for supporting numerous DIVARTY Combat Team missions because of its size, armor, and agility.

No one knows more about the vehicle’s importance than Staff Sgt. Kristine Chewning. Because of the vehicle’s distinctive design and armor, her three-Soldier crew was able to survive a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade.

“My patrol never expected or thought anything would ever hit our vehicles,” Chewning said about that recent nighttime patrol. “Everything was going very well until we got attacked.”

Although the gunner was injured from shrapnel from the initial impact of the round hitting the armor, the Fox crew was able to regain control of the situation, but the crew and Chewning will never be the same.

“It quickly changed my idea about terrorism, security and patrol operations we do and the training for combat operations,” she said. “Training only gives you ideas of situations but doesn’t qualify you as an expert.”

Although the vehicle’s minor damage has been repaired and her Soldier’s wounds have long healed, Chewning said she is, now more than ever, focused on the mission.

“We can train for combat operations, but once you’ve become involved in a situation like that you don’t look at training the same,” she said. “That night, my main concern was evacuating my Soldier injured in the attack and getting her immediate medical attention. This is one thing that keeps my mind focused. There is too much in life to lose, and I’m not about to let some terrorist kill my team.” Chewning said her Soldiers now know a lot more about the quick reaction force



Fox operators with the 69th Chemical Co., 1st Armored Division Artillery Combat Team, remove the vehicle’s 2,600-pound, 320-horsepower diesel engine during a scheduled maintenance check.

(QRF) and patrols. “They are not afraid of firing their weapons if we’re being attacked.”

The recon teams assigned to Camp Steel Falcon’s 69th Chemical Co. shatter any theories that the chemical operation specialists don’t do anything but hide behind locked doors cleaning protective masks.

“A chemical Soldier has to be versatile by nature. By being able to go to any type of unit, he or she must often learn that unit’s mission as well as maintaining knowledge of our unique skills,” said Sgt. Daniel Johnson.

Unlike many other vehicle operators in the 1st Armored Division, these Soldiers repair their own vehicles.

“It’s how we make our money,” said Staff Sgt. Manuel Rodriguez, a “Master” Fox operator. “It’s about being more knowledgeable about the deployment of NBC reconnaissance assets. Without proper maintenance, we can’t have that asset available to the commander.”

Rodriguez said proper maintenance is the common ingredient for safety and success. For the last 10 months, the Fox teams have operated their six vehicles without mishap in desert environments to the tight urban streets.

“The reason we have stayed accident free during this deployment is due to our intensive training,” said Rodriguez. “Every squad leader takes a new Soldier and ensures that Soldier is well trained before going on the road.”

Rodriguez said teaching the importance of depth perception is the key element to operating the vehicle. “The Fox is very maneuverable, but not knowing its dimensions and road capabilities can be very dangerous.”

Whether they are patrolling some of the most dangerous streets in Baghdad, or hunting chemical warheads, the versatility of the recon platoon displays the basic concept of the American warrior – flexibility, he said.

NEWS...

Red Cross Visits Saddam for First Time

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - International Red Cross representatives visited Saddam Hussein in U.S. custody for the first time Saturday, while Iraq's U.S. administrator said some experts believe it could take up to 15 months to organize an election that Shiites want as soon as possible.

Two Red Cross delegates, one of them a doctor, saw Saddam at an undisclosed detention facility inside Iraq, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

Boycott Appears to Affect Iran Elections

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) - Iran's hard-line Islamic rulers claimed Saturday that voters dealt reformers a decisive blow with a strong turnout in disputed parliament elections, but partial returns suggested the pro-reform boycott had an impact. With the votes tallied from more than half of Iran's 207 districts, the turnout was about 43 percent, the Interior Ministry said. If the trend holds, it would be a noticeable drop from the 67.2 percent in the last parliament elections in 2000.

California Gay Marriages in Legal Limbo

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - Many of the more than 3,000 same-sex couples who obtained marriage licenses from the city said getting married was among the most joyous events in their lives.

But because of legal uncertainty and political controversy, the certificates don't appear to be worth much more than sentimental value at this point. Until the legal fog lifts, businesses being contacted by gays and lesbians seeking new benefits probably won't acknowledge their marriages. Corporate counsels, employment law consultants and human resource departments already are devoting time and energy trying to figure out where they stand.

U.S.-Led Mission Presents Haiti Ultimatum

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - A U.S.-led diplomatic mission presented Haiti's government and opposition with a peace plan Saturday, hoping to end a two-week uprising that has killed at least 60 people and left more than a dozen towns in rebel hands. Neither side likes the proposed plan: President Jean-Bertrand Aristide says he refuses to negotiate with rebels he calls "terrorists," and the opposition complains the accord doesn't call for the deeply unpopular president to resign.

One Person Wins \$230M Mega Millions Prize

STEPHENS CITY, Va. (AP) - There was one winning ticket for the jackpot of at least \$230 million in the Mega Millions lottery, the biggest single prize in the game's history. The lucky ticket, purchased at a Stephens City convenience store, matched all five lotto numbers and the Mega Ball number to win the 11-state jackpot. Lottery officials waited Saturday for the holder or holders of that single ticket to come forward. The numbers drawn Friday night were: 1-13-20-21-30, and the Mega Ball was 24.

Entertainment...

Poll: Janet's Act Not Federal Case

By WILL LESTER, Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) -- Most Americans think the exposure of Janet Jackson's right breast during the Super Bowl halftime show was crass, but few believe it's a federal case.

An Associated Press poll found 54 percent of those surveyed said they thought the act, in which singer Justin Timberlake snatched off part of Jackson's bustier and revealed her breast to millions of television viewers was bad taste.

Only 18 percent thought it was an illegal act.

The Federal Communications Commission is investigating whether the broadcast violated federal indecency laws.

According to the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs, the FCC ought to spend its time on other things. Nearly 80 percent of respondents said it's a waste of money to investigate.

"I can see how parents wouldn't want their children to see it," said Diana Foster, a 50-year-old resident of Nicholas County, Ky., in the central part of the state. "But an investigation is a waste of money. Sure it wasn't very nice, but they're using our tax money for this."

In the AP-Ipsos poll, women were more likely than men to say the halftime show should be investigated and whites more likely than blacks. Republicans were twice as likely as Democrats to favor an investigation. Young adults were less likely than other age groups to think an investigation was called for.

A fourth of those in the poll said the act was neither in bad taste nor illegal. Almost half of young adults between age 18 and 29 said the display was neither. Unmarried men, people without college degrees and those who made lower incomes were more likely to think it was not in bad taste or illegal.

Despite limited public concern about the incident, there is evidence of public support for government action to clean up regular television channels.

Recent polling found a solid majority - about three fourths - who say they would support stricter rules on nudity and sexual content on regular television channels.

"They need to clean up television generally," said Michael Zannella, a 70-year-old retiree from Wheatfield, N.Y. "That one incident at the Super Bowl is nothing compared to what's on television all the time."

The AP-Ipsos poll of 1,000 adults was taken Feb. 16-18. It has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Thought for the day...

The Greatest Good

The greatest good you can do for another is not just share your riches, but reveal to them their own.
-- Benjamin Disraeli

Today in History...

February 22, 1980: THE MIRACLE ON ICE:

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) In one of the most dramatic upsets in Olympic history, the underdog U.S. hockey team, made up of collegians and second-rate professional players, defeats the defending champion Soviet team at the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid, New York. The Soviet squad, previously regarded as the finest in the world, fell to the youthful American team 4-3 before a frenzied crowd of 10,000 spectators. Two days later, the Americans defeated Finland 4-2 to clinch the hockey gold.

The Soviet team had captured the previous four Olympic hockey golds, going back to 1964, and had not lost an Olympic hockey game since 1968. Three days before the Lake Placid Games began, the Soviets routed the U.S. team 10-3 in an exhibition game at Madison Square Garden in New York City. The Americans looked scrappy, but few blamed them for it--their average age, after all, was only 22, and their team captain, Mike Eruzione, was recruited from the obscurity of the Toledo Blades of the International League.

Few had high hopes for the seventh-seeded U.S. team entering the Olympic tournament, but the team soon silenced its detractors, making it through the opening round of play undefeated, with four victories and one tie, thus advancing to the four-team medal round. The Soviets, however, were seeded No. 1 and as expected went undefeated, with five victories in the first round.

On Friday afternoon, February 22, the American amateurs and the Soviet dream team met before a sold-out crowd at Lake Placid. The Soviets broke through first, with its new young star, Valery Krotov, deflecting a slap shot beyond American goalie Jim Craig's reach in the first period. Midway through the period, Buzz Schneider, the only American who had previously been an Olympian, answered the Soviet goal with a high shot over the shoulder of Vladislav Tretiak, the Soviet goalie.

The relentless Soviet attack continued as the period progressed, with Sergei Makarov giving his team a 2-1 lead. With just a few seconds left in the first period, American Ken Morrow shot the puck down the ice in desperation. Mark Johnson picked it up and sent it into the Soviet goal with one second remaining. After a brief Soviet protest, the goal was deemed good, and the game was tied.

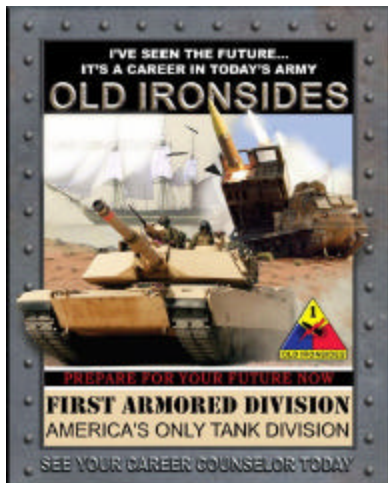
In the second period, the irritated Soviets came out with a new goalie, Vladimir Myshkin, and turned up the attack. The Soviets dominated play in the second period, outshooting the United States 12-2, and taking a 3-2 lead with a goal by Alesandr Maltsev just over two minutes into the period. If not for several remarkable saves by Jim Craig, the Soviet lead would surely have been higher than 3-2 as the third and final 20-minute period began.

Nearly nine minutes into the period, Johnson took advantage of a Soviet penalty and knocked home a wild shot by David Silk to tie the contest again at 3-3. About a minute and a half later, Mike Eruzione, whose last name means "eruption" in Italian, picked up a loose puck in the Soviet zone and slammed it past Myshkin with a 25-foot wrist shot. For the first time in the game, the Americans had the lead, and the crowd erupted in celebration.

There were still 10 minutes of play to go, but the Americans held on, with Craig making a few more fabulous saves. With five seconds remaining, the Americans finally managed to get the puck out of their zone, and the crowd began counting down the final seconds. When the final horn sounded, the players, coaches, and team officials poured onto the ice in raucous celebration. The Soviet players, as awestruck as everyone else, waited patiently to shake their opponents' hands.

The so-called Miracle on Ice was more than just an Olympic upset; to many Americans, it was an ideological victory in the Cold War as meaningful as the Berlin Airlift or the Apollo moon landing. The upset came at an auspicious time: President Jimmy Carter had just announced that the United States was going to boycott the 1980 Summer Games in Moscow because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Americans, faced with a major recession and the Iran hostage crisis, were in dire need of something to celebrate. After the game, President Carter called the players to congratulate them, and millions of Americans spent that Friday night in revelry over the triumph of "our boys" over the Russian pros.

As the U.S. team demonstrated in their victory over Finland two days later, it was disparaging to call the U.S. team amateurs. Three-quarters of the squad were top college players who were on their way to the National Hockey League (NHL), and coach Herb Brooks had trained the team long and hard in a manner that would have made the most authoritative Soviet coach proud. The 1980 U.S. hockey team was probably the best-conditioned American Olympic hockey team of all time--the result of countless hours running skating exercises in preparation for Lake Placid. In their play, the U.S. players adopted passing techniques developed by the Soviets for the larger international hockey rinks, while preserving the rough checking style that was known to throw the Soviets off-guard. It was these factors, combined with an exceptional afternoon of play by Craig, Johnson, Eruzione, and others, that resulted in the miracle at Lake Placid.



Reenlistment bonus available until soldiers depart Theater

Currently, more than 1,400 soldiers have taken advantage of the deployed force reenlistment bonus since October. Soldiers must understand the bonus is no longer available once they redeploy to their home station.

The most frequently asked question from soldiers is "how long am I eligible for the reenlistment bonus?"

The answer is simple: once a soldier leaves Iraq, Afghanistan, or Kuwait, the lump sum tax-free bonus no longer exists.

As we begin to redeploy, our Career Counselors and key retention personnel will become much less accessible as they will be spread thin throughout Iraq, Kuwait, and Germany.

Soldiers eligible for this incentive are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity well in advance of their expected redeployment date. Soldiers should contact their Career Counselors who are standing by to assist our Iron Soldiers in continuing to serve proudly and "Stay Army."

For more information, contact your career counselor:

• Command Career Counselor: SGM James Jaronowski, 551 0405

The Old Ironsides Report

February 22, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2004				As of: Saturday, February 21, 2004 10:20:42 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - PAC-10: STANFORD @ UCLA	THE DIVISION : - PARTNERS IN CRIME	CELEBRATION OF VICTORY - ARISTARCHUS	FOX NEWS LIVE	00:00
00:30				CORAL RIDGE HOUR - THE PRIVELEGE AND POWER OF PRAYER		00:30
01:00			SOUL FOOD	CHRISTOPHER CLOSEUP - SHAPING OUR WORLD.	FOX NEWS LIVE	01:00
01:30				CAFE VIDEO : - LIVE ONSET		01:30
02:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - WAC: GONZAGA @ TULSA	SPORTSCENTER		HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30				AIR FORCE TV NEWS	MCLAUGHLIN GROUP	02:30
03:00		SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (03'-04') : - DREW BARRYMORE/KELIS	SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON : - EAGER BEAVER	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - CUSA: UAB @ MEMPHIS	CAPITAL GANG	03:00
03:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - WORTH IT ALL			03:30
04:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC: FLORIDA @ MISSISSIPPI		MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD		WASHINGTON WEEK IN REVIEW	04:00
04:30		LIVE IN HOLLYWOOD	REAL VIDEOS : - BRIDE		HEADLINE NEWS	04:30
05:00			THE SIMPSONS : - HELTER SHELTER	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII: TEXAS @ OKLAHOMA	PEOPLE IN THE NEWS	05:00
05:30		THE ENTERTAINERS	MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE			05:30
06:00	ESPNEWS		WE HAVE A DREAM		CNN SATURDAY NIGHT	06:00
06:30	ESPNEWS	AMERICAN ATHLETE				06:30
07:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS		TRU CONFESSIONS	DATELINE INTERNATIONAL	07:00
07:30		HOUR OF POWER - REBUILDING BROKEN DREAMS				07:30
08:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - MVC: HAWAII @ SOUTHERN ILLINOIS	CELEBRATION OF VICTORY - ARISTARCHUS	AMERICAN IDOL		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:30		CORAL RIDGE HOUR - THE PRIVELEGE AND POWER OF PRAYER		NICK NEWS: DO WE NEED BLACK HISTORY MONTH?		08:30
09:00		CHRISTOPHER CLOSEUP - SHAPING OUR WORLD.	AMERICAN IDOL	MOTORWEEK	AT LARGE WITH GERALDO RIVERA	09:00
09:30		CAFE VIDEO : - LIVE ONSET	THE TWILIGHT ZONE : - MR. DINGLE, THE STRONG	EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	WISHBONE : - HOT DIGGETY DAWG	FANTASY ISLAND : - OVER THE HILL CAPER/ POOF, YOU'RE A MOVIE STAR	WWE SMACKDOWN!	ARMY NEWSWATCH	10:00
10:30		SESAME STREET SPECIALS : - ELMOCIZE			FOX NEWS WATCH	10:30
11:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - MWC: AIR FORCE @ UTAH	TRU CONFESSIONS	SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON : - EAGER BEAVER	STARGATE SG-1 : - DESCENT	HEADLINE NEWS	11:00
11:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - WORTH IT ALL		AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM	11:30
12:00			MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	HEADLINE NEWS	THE CHRIS MATTHEWS SHOW	12:00
12:30		NICK NEWS: DO WE NEED BLACK HISTORY MONTH?	REAL VIDEOS : - BRIDE	ESPNEWS	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	12:30
13:00	SPORTSCENTER	MOTORWEEK	THE SIMPSONS : - HELTER SHELTER	JUDGING AMY : - BOYS TO MEN	BIG STORY WEEKEND EDITION	13:00
13:30		EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES	MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE			13:30
14:00	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	HEADLINE NEWS	WE HAVE A DREAM	MISS CONGENIALITY	CNN PRESENTS	14:00
14:30	NBA FASTBREAK	AIR FORCE TV NEWS				14:30
15:00	NHL - NASHVILLE PREDATORS @ PHOENIX COYOTES	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC: ALABAMA @ MISSISSIPPI STATE			FOX & FRIENDS	15:00
16:00			AMERICAN IDOL	HEADLINE NEWS	FOX & FRIENDS	16:00
16:30				SEINFELD : - THE IMPLANT		16:30
17:00		SPORTSCENTER	AMERICAN IDOL	MEET THE PRESS	CBS NEWS SUNDAY MORNING	17:00
17:30	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT		THE TWILIGHT ZONE : - MR. DINGLE, THE STRONG			17:30
18:00	THE SPORTS REPORTERS	WWE SMACKDOWN!	FANTASY ISLAND : - OVER THE HILL CAPER/ POOF, YOU'RE A MOVIE STAR	AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM		18:00
18:30	SPORTSCENTER			ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT	FACE THE NATION	18:30
19:00		STARGATE SG-1 : - DESCENT	SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON : - EAGER BEAVER		HEADLINE NEWS	19:00
19:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - WORTH IT ALL	ESPNEWS	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	19:30
20:00		SPORTSCENTER	MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: DUKE @ MARYLAND	LATE EDITION W/ WOLF BLITZER	20:00
20:30	NBA HANGTIME	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	REAL VIDEOS : - BRIDE			20:30
21:00	NBA - CLEVELAND CAVALIERS @ NY KNICKS	NASCAR NEXTEL CUP SERIES - SUBWAY 400	THE SIMPSONS : - HELTER SHELTER			21:00
21:30			MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE			21:30
22:00			WE HAVE A DREAM	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN: WISCONSIN @ MICHIGAN	FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00					FOX NEWS LIVE	23:00
23:30	PGA TOUR - NISSAN OPEN: FINAL ROUND					23:30